



# SAN CONNECTIONS

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[www.schuylkillactionnetwork.org](http://www.schuylkillactionnetwork.org)

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## Norristown Tree Planting a Success!

Norristown Area School District, Montgomery County Conservation District, and Philadelphia Water Department hosted a Treevitalize Watersheds tree planting on October 21<sup>st</sup> at Norristown High School in West Norriton, PA. Volunteers included representatives from Valley Forge Watershed Association, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Aqua America, Pennsylvania American Water, Boy Scout Troop 622, and staff and students from Norristown High School. The planting included 160 trees and 53 small shrubs planted to help beautify and restore the riparian buffer along Stony Creek. Thanks to the volunteers for helping make this planting a success! ❖



*Photo Courtesy of Kelly Anderson*

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## Flooding in the Schuylkill River

The spring of 2006 was a tough one for the Schuylkill watershed. Many mine discharges flooded and overwhelmed storm culverts. The discharge from Pine Knot Tunnel topped its banks, spilled over to a nearby road and flooded residents (see photos). Surface water established thru reclamation at the Reading Anthra-



cite Repplier Pit flooded residents, where little or no flooding had occurred prior to reclamation. Mine subsidences opened near the Minersville Water Authority property and one swallowed part of Wade Road in St. Clair. Overflow at Mill Creek combined with the Schuylkill River to flood Port Carbon, Mt. Carbon, and Schuylkill Haven. On the Little Schuylkill River, Tamaqua Borough was evacuated due to the potential failure of Tuscarora State Park Lake dam. The Lehigh Coal and Navigation discharge at Route 309 in Tamaqua flowed higher than ever and threatened to blow out the 4 acre pond downstream. Fortunately Tamaqua was spared, but many of our stream gages and monitoring sites were overwhelmed by the storms.



*Photos Courtesy of Bill Reichert*

The SAN Abandoned Mine Drainage work-group will be vying for additional grants to revitalize the network of flow gages and water quality monitoring sites in Schuylkill County. ❖

## SAN Abandoned Mine Drainage Workgroup - 2006 Highlights

**Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) Remediation Projects** – AMD projects are primarily implemented by SAN partners, including Schuylkill Headwaters Association (SHA), Schuylkill Conservation District (SCD), and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP). Projects are funded by grants under Pennsylvania Growing Greener program, Clean Water Act Sec.319, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Targeted Watershed Initiative, PADEP Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Funds, Exelon, and other sources.

### Completed in 2006

- Otto Mine Tunnel Discharge – An aerobic wetland system is treating approximately 2,600 gallons per minute (gpm) of discharge to Muddy Branch. The treatment system began operation in June 2005; approximate reductions are 55% aluminum, 35% iron, 5% manganese, and 10% acidity. A fence has recently been constructed around key areas, and discharge monitoring is ongoing.
- Reevesdale South Dip Tunnel Discharge – An oxic limestone drain and wetlands are treating approximately 900 gpm of discharge to Wabash Creek. The treatment system began operating in April 2006 and monitoring to determine wetland effectiveness is currently underway.

### Planned, designed, or underway during 2006

- Mary D Mine Discharge - Land procured and design underway for a passive system that will treat approximately 5,000 gpm of AMD discharge to the Schuylkill River.
- Pine Forest Mine Discharge – An anoxic limestone drain, settling pond, and wetland treatment system have been designed and construction is underway for this 5,000 gpm discharge. The goal is to reduce metals and acidity loading to Little Wolf Creek, a tributary to Mill Creek.
- Bell Colliery Mine Discharge – A secondary settling pond has been designed and construction is underway to provide settling of solids resulting from backwash of two downflow limestone cells that were installed in 2004. The intent is to maintain effectiveness of current treatment by regular flushing of the solids. The facility discharges about 1,000 gpm to the main stem Schuylkill River. Planned reductions are 30% aluminum, 60% iron, 80% acidity, and 5% manganese.



*Bell Colliery— Photos Courtesy of Bill Reichert*

**Pine Knot Tunnel/Oak Hill Borehole Project** – Top AMD priority: contributes 30% of metals from all AMD sources in Schuylkill Watershed.

**Reduction of infiltration/inflow to Pine Knot mine pool** - Goal is to reduce tunnel discharge by up to 20%

- Rettew (SHA contractor) provided mapping and design for filling pits overlying the Pine Knot mine pool and for diverting streams away from them.
- Rettew completed design for treating the very acidic Neumeister discharge and diverting it away from a pit connected to the Pine Knot mine pool.

### Conceptual planning for treatment of the Pine Knot/Oak Hill discharge

- Army Corps of Engineers conducted site survey for conceptual study on treatment.
- PADEP is potential Corps funding partner
- Project Management Plan drafted and under PADEP review

**Stream Flow Monitoring Activities** – Conducted by United States Geological Survey, in coordination with SHA, SCD, and PADEP under Growing Greener and EPA Regional Geographic Initiative grants. Philadelphia Water Department also conducted routine stream monitoring. ❖

## SAN Education/Outreach Committee

Crystal Gilchrist has announced that she will no longer be able to lead the SAN Education/Outreach Committee due to time constraints. However, she will continue as a committee member. Our sincere thanks to Crystal Gilchrist for her dedicated leadership. Sarah N. Whitney, a Coastal Outreach Specialist for the Delaware Estuary Office of the Pennsylvania Sea Grant, has agreed to be the new lead. The goals of the committee remain the same: upgrading the website and establishing a clearinghouse, development of an outreach program for educators, and preparing a major ad campaign for the Schuylkill Watershed. The next meeting is scheduled for March 1 (10 AM) at the Schuylkill River Heritage Center in Pottstown, PA. For more information, contact Sarah at [swhitney@psu.edu](mailto:swhitney@psu.edu). Thanks to Sarah for volunteering! ❖

## SAN Earth Day Clean Up

Mark Your Calendar!

April 21, 2007

Join this ambitious statewide effort to remove litter and trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, parks, forests, riverbanks, neighborhoods and open spaces.

### Pennsylvania Participates in the Great American Cleanup

(<http://www.greatpacleanup.org>)

**March 1 to May 31**

#### SAN Contacts:

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or

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## SAN Planning Committee Drafting Strategic Plan for 2007-2010

Jen Adkins of the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary has spearheaded Planning Committee efforts to develop a draft strategic plan which will enable us to focus and direct our resources. The Mission and Purpose are as follows:

The mission of the SAN is to improve the water resources of the Schuylkill River Watershed by working in partnership with state agencies, local watershed organizations and land conservation organizations, businesses, academics, water suppliers, local and governments, regional agencies, and the federal government to transcend regulatory and jurisdictional boundaries in the strategic implementation of protection measures. The SAN seeks to achieve this mission through enhanced communication and collaboration and, more specifically by working cooperatively with interested parties to:

- Support existing efforts and implement actions to restore and protect water quality in the Schuylkill River Watershed;
- Promote the long-term coordinated stewardship and restoration of the watershed and educate others regarding their roles in protecting the watershed and water supplies;
- Transfer the experience and lessons learned to other communities; and
- Enhance intergovernmental communication and coordination by working together on the identification and resolution of environmental issues with shared regulatory responsibility.

For more information, contact Jen at [JAdkins@delawareestuary.org](mailto:JAdkins@delawareestuary.org). ❖

### DATES TO REMEMBER

February 8, 2007	SAN Planning Committee Meeting @ EPA
March 1, 2007	SAN Education/Outreach Meeting in Pottstown
March 3, 2007	Schuylkill River Congress
March 4, 2007	Philadelphia Flower Show (look for the SAN/EPA exhibit)
March 8, 2007	SAN Planning Meeting @ EPA
March 8, 2007	SAN Monitoring Meeting @ EPA
March 14, 2007	SAN AG Meeting in Reading
March 31, 2007	Opening Day of Trout Season
April 21, 2007	Great PA Cleanup
April 22, 2007	Earth Day



*Hamburg Cleanup 2006  
Photo Courtesy of L. Reynolds*